

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1.1 Who is running the Project?

A1.1 Leitrim County Council (LCC) in conjunction with Roscommon County Council (RCC) are progressing the development of the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project. The Project is being managed by Roscommon National Roads Regional Office (NRRO), with Arup appointed as lead consultant, to advance the Project through the planning and design process.

Q1.2 Why is the Project needed?

A1.2 This is explained in more detail on Board 2 of the public display material.

In summary, the N4 is a strategic corridor from Dublin to the northwest and is particularly important for the enhancement of accessibility to the towns it passes through. The existing N4 in the study area is liable to flooding, which has resulted in long diversions in the past, a factor which severely impacts the resiliency of this portion of the N4 TEN-T Comprehensive Network.

In addition, there is a lack of facilities on the existing N4 which can enable active travel and leisure trips as an alternative to those trips made by motor vehicle. Moreover, due to issues relating to the single, narrow bridge crossing from Carrick-on-Shannon to Cortober, congestion impacts on journey times and amenity and contributes to considerable delay.

The N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project endeavours to resolve the existing transport and safety issues along the section of the N4 between Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod, in particular, the transportation issues through Carrick-on-Shannon, Cortober and their environs. Refer to Q1.24 to the current extents of the Project to be progressed to planning.

Q1.3 Why did the Project start again with a blank canvas? What happened to the previous project?

A1.3 The previous project was developed and assessed over 10 years ago. During that time a lot has changed in terms of constraints, legislation, and people's movements (travel for work, education and recreation). It was important to start with a blank canvas to fully understand what the transport issues are currently, what the trip generators and attractors are and what is the most optimal transport solution.

Q1.4 What does “Preferred Transport Solution” mean?

A1.4

The Preferred Transport Solution is a combination of the alternative and options that represent the best balance and most benefit for the project as shown on Board 7 of the earlier Public Display No. 3. It is an integrated sustainable transport solution that includes active travel measures for walking and cycling, improvements to public transport, demand management measures and upgraded and new road infrastructure for the communities along this section of the N4 transport corridor.

It should be noted that the corridor for the road component of the Preferred Transport Solution is 300m wide along the proposed N4 and 150m wide along the urban link road, whereas the design within this corridor will be significantly less than this (refer to Q1.10 below)

Q1.5 How was the Preferred Transport Solution selected?

A1.5

Post the conclusion of Public Consultation No. 2 on Alternatives and Options, the design team completed their review of the feedback received from the public and undertook a systematic assessment of the Alternatives and Options under the six multi-criteria headings, namely Economy, Safety, Accessibility & Social Inclusion, Integration, Environment and Physical activity, and selected a Preferred Transport Solution to deliver a reliable and sustainable transport solution for this section of the N4 corridor. The process by which this work culminated in the selection of the Preferred Transport Solution is outlined in the Options Selection Report at this link <https://carrickdromod.ie/option-selection-report/>.

Q1.6 Were the landowners directly affected by the Preferred Transport Solution be contacted?

A1.6

Every landowner directly affected by the Preferred Transport Solution was contacted by letter as part of the earlier Public Display No. 3 event. This is available at this link: <https://carrickdromod.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/274219-ARUP-02-OS-PP-Z-000001.pdf>

Q1.7 When is the earliest timeframe that the Project could be built?

A1.7

Subject to continued funding, it is proposed to submit a planning application to An Bord Pleanála in 2025 i.e. conclusion of Phase 3. Once the planning application is submitted, An Bord Pleanála dictate the Project timeline for the Oral Hearing (if one is required) and the decision date. If a positive decision is made by An Bord Pleanála, and there are no court challenges to this decision, and **funding for construction is approved by government** it will generally take a minimum of two years to complete the detailed design, prepare a tender, and appoint a Contractor. The duration for construction is currently unknown.

Q1.8 Who carried out the environmental assessments on the alternatives and options?

A1.8 A large team of specialists are conducting the environmental assessments for the project. The numerous disciplines and their relevant specialists are listed below.

- Landscape and Visual – Brady Shipman Martin
- Biodiversity – Scott Cawley Ltd.
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage – Irish Archaeological Consultancy (IAC)
- Human Beings and Population – Optimize Consultants and CHI
- Air Quality – Arup
- Climate – Arup
- Carbon / Circular Economy Assessment – Arup
- Noise and Vibration – Awn Consulting
- Soils and Geology – Arup
- Hydrogeology – Arup
- Hydrology – Hydro Environmental Ltd.
- Agronomy – Curtin Agricultural Consultants
- Material Assets- Non-Agriculture- Arup

Q1.9 When will the planning permissions, which are currently frozen due to comments from this project, be unfrozen?

A1.9 Planning reviews are undertaken on all planning applications of interest throughout the duration of the project. Following the commencement of Public Consultation No. 2 – Alternatives and Options, the area of interest for planning referrals was refined from the constraints study area to a buffer around the proposed Option Corridors. Since the Preferred Transport Solution has now been selected, the area of interest has again been refined down to a buffer around the Preferred Transport Solution (including around the urban areas where active travel components are located).

Q1.10 What was the width of the Preferred Option Corridor and what is actually required?

A1.10 The corridor for the road component of the Preferred Transport Solution was 300m wide along the proposed N4 and 150m along the urban link road, whereas the width of the design within the corridor will be significantly less than this. The 300m/150m corridor does not represent the actual width of the proposed road or the potential lands to be acquired. The corridor indicates the lands within which the proposed road could be developed.

Q1.11 Where is the design?

A1.11 As part of Phase 3, the project team have been progressing the design of the active travel, demand management and road components of the Preferred Transport Solution within the project extents outlined in Q1.24. The design will continue to be progressed drawing upon further surveys and investigations, information received from the public and technical and environmental inputs, during Phase 3 and this will enable all land acquisition requirements to be identified.

Q1.12 Will the information which is on display at the event be displayed somewhere the public can access it after the Public Display ends?

A1.12 After the in-person event ends, the public display materials will be moved to the Leitrim County Council Offices at Aras an Chontae, St George's Terrace, Townparks, Carrick-On-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, N41 PF67 **until 12 April 2024** where the public can access and view the physical public display materials.

The Public Display material is also available on the Project website (www.carrickdromod.ie) including an the interactive webmap. There are also pdfs of the material available on the Project website (www.carrickdromod.ie).

We appreciate that not everybody may have access to the internet or visit the offices and in this instance, you can contact the Project Liaison Officer, Leitrim County Council at 071 9620005 and we will make alternative arrangements.

Q1.13 What is Active Travel and what facilities are proposed for pedestrians and cyclists?

A1.13 Active Travel means walking or cycling as part of a purposeful journey. Walking as part of a commute to work, cycling to the shop, or scooting to school are all considered Active Travel, whereas walking or cycling for recreational purposes are not. The provision of safe infrastructure to support Active Travel such as segregated cycling and walking facilities can also help alleviate congestion and meet climate action objectives by providing viable alternatives and connectivity with existing public transport infrastructure.

The benefits of Active Travel include health benefits as well as environmental and economic benefits. The Active Travel and Demand Management measures being proposed are indicated on the display material and includes a comprehensive cycle network, improved cycle facilities, as well as pedestrian/cycle facilities across the extents of the N4 corridor.

Q1.14

What public transportation solutions are included?

The implementation of the road based element of the Preferred Transport Solution as per A1.24 will result in improved journey time reliability and reduced congestion which will in turn improve the infrastructure on which Public Transport (Bus) can operate. The project can facilitate the improvement for Bus Services by removing congestion and improvement in the quality of the road.

In consultation with the NTA the following will be considered during Phase 3 of the project in conjunction with the provision of improved road infrastructure:

- Provision of more inter-urban bus services and ensure suitable connectivity to the towns and villages along this route
- Improvement to local bus services in Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober
- Departure and arrival times of both rail and bus linked to typical working patterns

Q1.15

If you provide all the proposed public transport improvements, why do you need to build a new road?

A1.15

Our studies to date have shown that Public Transport Improvements in isolation will not resolve the transport issues identified and meet the project objectives but they do form part of an overall transport solution to deliver an overall sustainable transport solution which caters for all modes.

Q1.16

Can the Preferred Option Corridor be changed?

A1.16

The Preferred Option Corridor is 300m/150m wide whereas the design within this corridor will be significantly less than this. It is unlikely that there will be major modifications to the Preferred Option Corridor, however, the exact details of the landtake, earthworks, junction, side road design and mitigation measures will be developed during this phase of the planning and design process. The design can also deviate outside this corridor following receipt of updated information, on-going surveys and public consultation.

Q1.17

What type of surveys will be done on my land?

A1.17

Environmental specialists may have to undertake non-invasive site surveys (e.g. site walking for archaeology, habitat/mammal surveys for ecology etc.) on your property as part of the environmental studies. All specialists will be carrying identification and a letter of authorisation of access from Leitrim County Council. If you have any concerns about people requesting to enter your land, please contact the Project Liaison Officer.

Contact shall be made separately should any invasive surveys be required in advance of undertaking such surveys, e.g. geotechnical investigations and compensation is paid for such works.

Q1.18 How will I know if my property will be affected by land acquisition?

A1.18 Public Display No. 4 shows the proposed route alignment which gives an indication of potential land acquisition. Landowners have been notified by post of potential land acquisition in advance of Public Display No. 4. Further consultation with those with property within the landtake will occur as the design progresses through Phase 3 and the landtake necessary for the construction and operation of the Project is finalised. A further public display will occur later in the year to display the full extents of the landtake prior to making the planning application to An Bord Pleanála.

Q1.19 What do I do if I want to object?

A1.19 Formal objections can only be submitted after the planning application is submitted to An Bord Pleanála. In the interim, please feel free to contact the project liaison officer with your concerns as it may be possible to mitigate issues throughout the design process.

Q1.20 What about compensation?

A1.20 Compensation will be paid wherever land or property is directly affected (i.e. land has been acquired / purchased).

Q1.21 How are the impacts of adverse noise, air or visual disturbance addressed?

A1.21 This is considered during this phase i.e. Design Stage and Environmental Evaluation. For example, residences may be provided with earth bunds, landscaping, high walls etc. to mitigate these effects.

Q1.22 How will my personal data be handled?

A1.22 A Privacy Statement with regards to the collection and usage of personal data is available on the Project website. Personal data provided to the Project Team is stored securely and in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. The data will only be used for the purposes of the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project. Data will not be retained for any longer than is necessary for the completion of the Project.

Q1.23 Can a member of the Project Team be contacted by the public or their representative to ascertain if a proposed planning application will be affected by the Project?

A1.23 Yes, the Project liaison officer is available for the full duration of the Project to answer any questions the public and interested parties may have in relation to project. The Project Team will be able to advise of any potential conflicts between the proposed planning application and this project.

Q1.24 Why is the bypass only progressed at this time?

A1.24 The bypass element of the N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project is being prioritised for the Design and Environmental Evaluation stage which will include a new urban street, a demand management component, an active travel component, a road component, comprising the bypass itself, and a public transport component. This aligns with the 2023 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Active Travel and Greenways, the objectives of the Climate Action Plan 2023, other national policies, and the terms and conditions set by the Minister for Transport pursuant to the Roads Acts 1993 to 2015.

Q1.25 Will the on-line section be progressed in the future?

A1.25 Funding is currently available for the Project as defined in A1.24 above. However, the corridor of the Preferred Transport Solution along the on-line section from Attirory to Faulties will continue to be protected. This also aligns with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland's remit on protecting the national road network. Funding is reviewed annually, and this section could be progressed in the future.

Q1.26 Why is a dual carriageway cross-section under consideration?

A1.26 TII's Rural Road Link Design standard (DN-GEO-03031) outlines the mechanism of selecting a cross-section for a Project. This standard adopts the 'divided roads' terminology in place of 'dual carriageway' and follows a similar approach to the language adopted in the draft TEN-T regulations and the recommendations of the National Speed Limit Review. As the N4 is part of the TEN-T network, is a national road and has a speed limit of over 80 km/h, and the predicted traffic exceeds the capacity of a single carriageway, a divided carriageway (formerly defined as a dual carriageway) is proposed.

Q1.27 Why are the existing junctions in the urban area upgraded?

A1.27 The desire lines for active travel are close to businesses, education and leisure facilities, river walkways, cafes and restaurants, and given that all these attractors are located in the urban area, the primary focus of the design of active travel facilities has been to serve the demand for same in the urban area. With the significant benefit of a reduction in traffic volumes through the existing town centre, the active travel measures consist mainly of on-line interventions at the existing junctions, at existing desire lines and along the existing N4 road network within the town centre. These measures provide an opportunity to re-prioritise the hierarchy of road users along the existing road network.

Drummagh Link, to the north-east of the town centre, will be designed as an urban street with the provision of pedestrian and cyclist facilities suited to the surrounding urban environment also. The purpose of this road is to connect the three radial routes to the northeast of the town namely the R280 Leitrim Road, the Summerhill Road and the Castlecarrara Road to avoid this traffic using the inner town network and provide a more direct route to the existing N4 and the bypass, and to provide a more direct line along the desire line for active travel.

Q1.28 What is the form of the new bridge on the bypass over the River Shannon?

A1.28 This has not been decided at this time. The selection of the form of bridge will follow a process of optioneering as set out in TII guidance to ensure a balance of all matters environmental, cost, aesthetics and due consideration of the receiving environment is achieved.

Q1.29 What is the clearance of the new bridge on the bypass over the Elphin Road?

A1.29 The standard clearance over a regional road to the underside of the new bridge on the bypass is 5.3m.

Q1.30 What is the purpose of drainage ponds?

A1.30 The ponds are designed to attenuate flow following the introduction of pavement in place of agricultural lands as well as to provide a sustainable drainage treatment to protect water quality downstream of the outfalls from the proposed Project.